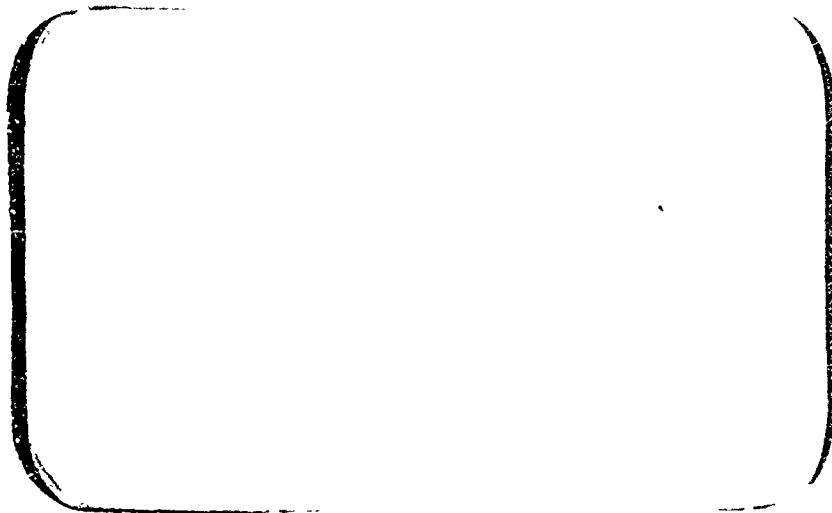


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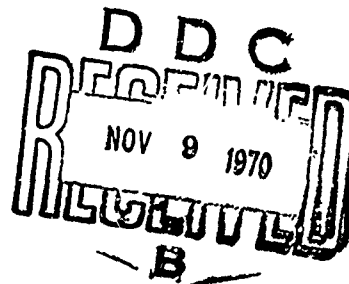
Research By-Product

CRITICAL COMBAT PERFORMANCES,
KNOWLEDGES, AND SKILLS REQUIRED OF THE
INFANTRY RIFLE SQUAD LEADER

Bayonet Knife and Hand-to-Hand Combat

by
Henry E. Kelly

December 1968



Technical Advisory Service

This document does not represent official opinion or policy
of the Department of the Army.

HumRRO Division No. 4
(Infantry)

The George Washington University
HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH OFFICE
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FOREWORD

In response to a request from the United States Army Infantry School (USAIS), HumRRO Division No. 4 (Infantry) initiated a Technical Advisory Service research project to identify and record the critical combat performances, knowledges, and skills required of the Infantry Rifle Squad Leader (IRSL) and the Infantry Fire Team Leader (IFTL).

The requirements imposed upon the IRSL and IFTL are essentially the same, except that the former is responsible for the control of the men and fires of both fire teams in a rifle squad, rather than only one. The senior IFTL within each squad must be prepared to assume effective leadership of the squad immediately if the IRSL becomes a casualty, completes a prescribed combat tour, or is absent for any reason. Since it is common practice to provide the same training for candidates for both positions of leadership and to employ the outstanding candidates in the higher position, each paper in this series will set forth the critical requirements imposed upon the IRSL and, therein, those imposed upon the IFTL as well.

Under Work Unit LEAD, Work Sub-Unit I, the critical combat performances, knowledges, and skills of the Infantry Rifle Platoon Leader were published in a series of 41 papers covering a like number of subject areas. Each paper was published with prior review and concurrence by the USAIS Instructional Departments concerned. These papers are being used as the primary source of data in completing a parallel series of papers for the Infantry Rifle Squad Leader and the Infantry Fire Team Leader. This document details the requirements of the bayonet knife and hand-to-hand combat.

This Technical Advisory Service research is being performed at HumRRO Division No. 4 (Infantry), Fort Benning, Georgia. The present Director of Research is Dr. T. O. Jacobs.

Military support for the study is being provided by the U.S. Army Infantry Human Research Unit, Fort Benning, Georgia. LTC Chester I. Christie, Jr. is the present Unit Chief.

HumRRO research is conducted under Army Contract DA 44-188-ARO-2 and under Army Project 2J024701A712 01, Training, Motivation and Leadership Research.

Meredith P. Crawford
Director
Human Resources Research Office

BAYONET KNIFE AND HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT

General Considerations

Introduction

The bayonet knife is designed for use when the primary weapon of the individual soldier cannot be used for one or more reasons. As with other emergency-type weapons, a tendency exists to neglect the bayonet's use, both in training and combat. When a situation requires the bayonet's use, however, it is indispensable. It is a command responsibility of the IRSL to ensure that his men are trained to employ the bayonet both individually and in groups where teamwork is required, and that it is carried in combat by all men who are so equipped, unless another knife-type weapon serving the same purpose replaces it or competent orders direct otherwise.

The bayonet knife can be used in its primary role as a bayonet attached to the rifle, or alternatively used detached as a knife or general purpose utility tool. As a knife, its use is of primary importance where a silent weapon is required in close proximity to the enemy, or when contact is so close that firearms cannot be safely or effectively used, as in a confined cave or tunnel or in derending against an opponent who jumps in upon an individual resting in a foxhole.

Skill developed in the use of the bayonet knife builds the self-confidence of an individual who has been realistically trained in its use. The soldier who is well-trained in bayonet combat and in hand-to-hand fighting increases in aggressive spirit and the essential will to fight. Such training also constitutes an excellent physical conditioner closely paralleling the physical requirements of combat.

Current unconventional combat with its increased emphasis upon long-range patrolling, clearing operations in built-up or heavily vegetated areas, and the greatly increased close range, limited visibility combat encountered emphasizes the combat potential of the bayonet knife, not only as a bayonet but as a knife in hand-to-hand combat. There will be times when close terrain and confined spaces make the knife the only usable weapon. Beyond that, emergencies arise in hand-to-hand combat where the individual soldier must depend upon his own natural resources, at times aided only by improvised weapons.

The bayonet knife is a handy tool in probing for hidden mines, caches of munitions or supplies, and even for personnel hidden in spider holes. In the clearing of caves, bunkers, or tunnels where even the firing of the pistol is precluded, the bayonet knife is an essential weapon. It is also handy in opening food containers and as a utensil both when heating foods and when eating.

At times, in certain types of combat, a commander may consider it advisable not to carry the bayonet, either because of its weight or, more likely, the added encumbrance of another piece of equipment for the soldier to add to the numerous items of his load. Substitution of another weapon/tool such as a bolo or machete may also be considered as advisable in jungle or thickly overgrown terrain when directed by competent authority.

The use of the bayonet in its primary role on the rifle also creates fear in the opponent, particularly in an adversary who has an overly developed distaste for close combat. The infantry soldier must be hardened to realize that in combat one either kills or is killed and thorough bayonet training constitutes an aid to his survival provided such training is realistic and varied and not limited to enthusiastic grunting while engaged in thrusting at a passive bayonet dummy.

Scope

The performances, knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes covered in this paper are those the IRSL must possess to train and lead a rifle squad in combat. Where the knowledge or skill in question is one which must also be possessed by other members of the rifle squad, it is assumed that the IRSL is also trained and motivated to ensure that his men are trained to an acceptable standard of proficiency.*

In combat the bayonet will most often be employed upon the individual initiative of the user without command guidance once the bayonet has been fixed. Precombat training in the combat employment of the weapon, is therefore, of more than usual importance to the IRSL.

The material in this paper relates to all the papers on tactical operations, especially those dealing with physical conditioning, patrolling, and offensive combat. Other directly related information will be found in the papers on Defensive Operations; Mounted and Dismounted Platoon Combat Formations; Squad Formations, Battle Drill, and Elementary Fire and Maneuver; and Technique of Fire of the Rifle Squad.

Materiel

Rifle, M16 or M14.

Other TOE weapons and equipment, especially for close contact, such as caliber .45 pistol.

Flashlights and other similar illumination equipment for use in confined areas such as caves, bunkers, or tunnels.

Hand-to-hand improvised equipment such as ropes and other expedient silencing equipment.

Special clothing and shoes for silent close-up movement.

*For additional details see FM 21-150 Combatives.

Battlefield Cues:

Anticipated close contact with the enemy as prior to the assault of a hostile position or in the final defense of a penetrated friendly position.

Patrol operations where use of the fixed bayonet may be required as a silent weapon.

Anticipated hand-to-hand operations requiring silent use of a knife weapon.

Individual operations in confined spaces where firearms cannot be used with safety, as in small caves or tunnels.

Situations where the intermingling of friendly and enemy troops preclude the use of firearm, or grenades.

Situations which may involve use of a knife and/or hand-to-hand techniques due to the lack of any other weapon.

Situations requiring use of the knife as a probe for mines or boobytraps in the absence of a more effective detector.

Situations requiring use of the knife as a digging tool in the cautious uncovering of a detected mine or boobytrap.

Situations in which individuals are detailed to guard or otherwise control prisoners of war.

Situations requiring use of the knife as an improvised tool or utensil in the absence of a more effective specifically designed tool or utensil.

Indications of the need for maintenance, cleaning or sharpening of the bayonet knife.

Performances, Knowledges, and Skills

1. THE IRSL WILL ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE SQUAD ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE BAYONET KNIFE THEY ARE ISSUED AND CARRY AND MAINTAIN IT PROPERLY.

He must : know that the bayonet knife is dual-purposed for use either as a bayonet or as a knife and that:

1

- a. The Bayonet Knife M7 issued for use with the M16A1 rifle and its bayonet scabbard, the M8A1, together weigh about 1 lb.
- b. The Bayonet Knife M6 issued for use with the 7.62-mm rifle M16 and its M8A1 bayonet scabbard together weigh about 1 lb.

: ensure that all members of the squad maintain the bayonet knife properly, to include:

2

- a. The blade is kept sharp and free of nicks or dents by periodic grinding, filing, or stoning.
- b. That the metal parts are kept clean, free of rust, and lightly oiled.
- c. The compress locking click operates freely in fixing and unfixing the bayonet knife.
- d. That the scabbard is clean and slightly und, where necessary, repainted with lusterless olive drab paint.

: ensure that all members of the squad are indoctrinated against misuses of the bayonet which result in breakage or undue wear.

3

2. THE IRSL WILL ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE SQUAD ARE QUALIFIED TO USE THE BAYONET AS A WEAPON IN HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT.

He will : ensure that his men are practiced in the techniques of hand-to-hand combat with the bayonet in combination with the use of other means of hand-to-hand combat including the various counters, kicks, blows, and other movements used.

4

NOT REPRODUCIBLE

: ensure that bayonet training is conducted under realistic conditions designed to physically condition and harden the participants for the end purpose of infantry training, close combat. 5

: ensure that his men know that use of the bayonet may be vital under combat conditions where: 6

- a. Silence and secrecy are required, as in a night attack or on a patrol.
- b. Contact is so close, with friendly and enemy troops so intermingled, that the use of rifle fire or grenades is impracticable.
- c. Contact is so close that time is not available to reload an empty weapon to meet a fast closing enemy.

: ensure that his men aggressively employ these principles of bayonet fighting: 7

- a. Take rapid, relentless advantage of any opening presented by an opponent.
- b. Create an opening if none is presented, by feinting or parrying an opponent's weapon and then driving the blade or weapon butt into the opponent with killing force.
- c. Utilize these vulnerable target areas of an opponent's body: the throat, face, chest, abdomen, and groin.
- d. Utilize, at times, an initial threat against the throat, prepared, as the opponent instinctively protects himself, to drive home a thrust to a vulnerable area left exposed.
- e. Utilize a relentless follow-up attack should the initial thrust, parry, or butt stroke fail to make contact.

: ensure that his men are practiced in the basic attack positions under realistic combat conditions to include the guard, short guard, and high port. (The rest positions [at ease and rest] and the high port and crossover position are utilized in training; the whirl position can be utilized both in training and in combat when attacked from the rear.) 8

NOT REPRODUCIBLE

- e. All details of skill precisely, while progressively developing speed and dexterity.

: ensure that his men are indoctrinated in the use, during close combat, in addition to the bayonet knife, of every available weapon, natural or improvised; drilling them in the skilled use of these means to the extent circumstances permit:

14

- a. Natural weapons including the knife edge of one's hand, the fist, the extended fingers in gouging action against the eyes or face, the boot kick, normally delivered with the boot toe, and one's knees, elbows, shoulders, head, or teeth.
- b. Improvised weapons including: sand or dirt thrown into the opponent's eyes or face, an entrenching tool, steel helmet, machete, or even a stone, stout stick, or other object at hand.

: drill his men to exploit rapidly an opponent's exposure of a critical target in one of these three vulnerable body regions:

15

- a. Head and neck: the eyes, neck, and nose.
- b. Trunk: stomach, the groin space, and kidneys.
- c. Limbs: the knee, instep, and arm joints.

: drill his men in maintaining balance, and protecting the most vulnerable portions of the body through utilization of these basic positions and movements:

16

- a. Right and left guard positions along the lines of a boxer's stance with the fingers extended and joined.
- b. Rear guard position, quickly reversing the guard position.
- c. Forward or backward glide.
- d. Ground fighting position when unable to recover to feet before attacked.

He must ; drill his men in these methods of hand-to-hand attack in close combat:

17

NOT REPRODUCIBLE

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He must ; drill his men in these methods of hand-to-hand attack in close combat:

17

- a. The kick as the basis of hand-to-hand attack and maintenance of good kicking distance in every encounter is essential to avoid permitting the opponent to close or grapple.
 - (1) Side kick from either guard position at the opponent's groin (a speed of return equal to the speed of kick is important to avoid opponent catching the foot).
 - (2) Pivot kick from either guard position with either groin or kidneys as the target (more powerful than the side kick and can be launched from a greater distance).
- b. Heel stomp, best used against a prone opponent; drive heel down forcefully as if to drive the back edge of the boot heel into the ground, recover quickly.
- c. Rear strangle takedown, attacking from the opponent's rear. (For details see FM 21-150 Combatives.)
- d. Use of a length of wire or stout cord employing either the one-hand or two-hand loops to strangle a surprised opponent, particularly when silent operations are required.

He will : drill his men in countering hostile close combat attacks before or immediately after a hold is secured, using bites, kicks, or blows at vulnerable points to help break the hold, together with one or more of these counters:*

18

- a. A check blow with hand or elbow to a vulnerable target.
- b. A finger jab to the eyes or throat.
- c. The arms pin counter followed by a blow to opponent's groin or stomach.
- d. The front body hold counter used only when opponent is too close for use of kick or finger jab.
- e. The side or pivot kick counter using lower arm, fist, or nearest foot.

*For details see FM 21-150 Combatives.

f. Defense against bayonet attack--used only when no other defense is possible:

- (1) Use a high or low parry with follow-up as counter to high or low thrust.
- (2) Use bayonet disarming techniques for counters to a long or short thrust.

He must : drill his men in unarmed attack to include use of:

19

- a. Hip, reverse hip, overshoulder, and overhead throws.
- b. Cross-hock, rear, and front-leg takedowns.
(For details see FM 21-150 Combatives.)

: drill his men in countering a hostile hand-to-hand attacker with a knife, employing:

20

- a. Use of knife disarming counters to a downward, upward, or side-stroke of a knife, (For details see FM 21-150 Combatives.)
- b. Any available object as an aid, such as a stout stick or shovel, in attempting to knock the knife from the opponent's hand, or to strike him in a vulnerable spot.
- c. Diverting means such as throwing sand or dirt into the attacker's eyes in combination with evasive action, with a quick attempt to seize the initiative while the attacker is at a disadvantage.

4. THE IRSL WILL, DURING COMBAT, EXERCISE COMMAND CONTROL AND SUPERVISION OVER THE SQUAD'S EMPLOYMENT OF THE BAYONET KNIFE AND OTHER TYPES OF HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT TO THE EXTENT THE SITUATION PERMITS.

He will : ensure that all bayonet-equipped men enter combat with their bayonet knife, aided in its use by timely directions combined with well understood SOP's involving:

21

- a. The fixing of the bayonet knife on command or signal, or upon the individual initiative of the soldier when close combat is anticipated, in either an offensive or defensive situation.
- b. The fixing of the bayonet knife on order or individual initiative action promising to require its use impends, such as when:

- (1) The squad is about to launch an assault upon a hostile position.
- (2) A hostile attack appears likely to close with the squad's defense especially if visibility is limited.
- (3) A patrol is to move through terrain favoring its close range surprise under conditions of limited visibility.
- (4) Members of the squad are to control or escort groups of prisoners of war.

He must : ensure that members of his squad about to engage in close combat operations necessitating secrecy and the use of silent weapons, or under conditions precluding the use of firearms, are properly equipped with silent weapons and specifically cautioned as to the necessity for silence when:

22

- a. The weapons available and considered for use include the bayonet knife or a similar weapon, suitable wire or cord for use in strangling, and/or blackjack or similar club.
- b. Operating close to a hostile position to gain information, take prisoners, or silence a sentinel or other hostile security personnel.
- c. On long-range reconnaissance patrols where the use of firearms would be inadvisable except as a last resort.
- d. On missions where prisoners may have to be taken, searched, and gagged.
- e. Operating in extremely confined areas such as caves or tunnels where the use of firearms might cause cave-in or stun the user.

He will : ensure that all members of the squad are proficient in the approved procedures for the searching of prisoners to include:

23

- a. Wherever possible moving prisoner(s) to an area where friendly assistance is available.
- b. Where an unassisted search of a prisoner is necessary:

- (1) As a preliminary, the prisoner is convinced by words or actions that he will be killed if he resists.
- (2) The prisoner is not allowed to talk, look back, move his arms, or take any distracting action.
- (3) The prisoner is first placed at a disadvantage in an unbalanced position either prone, kneeling, or required to lean against a wall or support with feet crossed and as far as possible to the rear.
- (4) The prisoner is not permitted within arms length until in an unbalanced position.
- (5) If armed with a knife or pistol it is kept ready to use on side away from prisoner.
- (6) Vigilance is maintained even after search is completed.

He must : ensure that all members of the squad are proficient in the proper techniques of searching a prisoner to include:

24

- a. The initial "patting" or "feel" method, paying attention to armpits, arms, back, groin area, legs, clothing folds around waist, chest and boot tops. (Especially care is required if a hand is placed in the prisoner's pockets or clothing folds.)
- b. When armed with a rifle, the search can profitably be proceeded by having the prisoner lie down on stomach, arms and legs extended, and close together; the rifle muzzle is kept at the small of prisoner's back ready to fire; after the first search is completed, the prisoner is required to turn on his back and searched from the front with the rifle against his stomach.
- c. When armed with knife or pistol, to search a prisoner leaning off-balance against a support with searcher's left foot in front of prisoner's feet and knife or pistol ready at searcher's right hip, search his left side, remaining ready to kick his feet out from under him if he moves; to search his right side, reverse the procedure.

- d. Another method of search when armed with knife or pistol is to place the prisoner off-balance by having him spread his legs far apart, locking his fingers together on top of his head, remaining clear of him, weapon ready in right hand and close against searcher's body, search him thoroughly.
- e. When searching more than one prisoner, place all of them at a maximum disadvantage by one of the preceding methods and then search each in turn, meanwhile keeping searcher's weapon ready and watching all of them carefully throughout.

He will : practice all men in the techniques of securing and gagging prisoners to include the use of expedient equipment such as shoelaces, belts, neckties, handkerchiefs or twisted strips of cloth, coupled with pieces of rope or wire which should be carried if the taking of prisoners is anticipated.

25